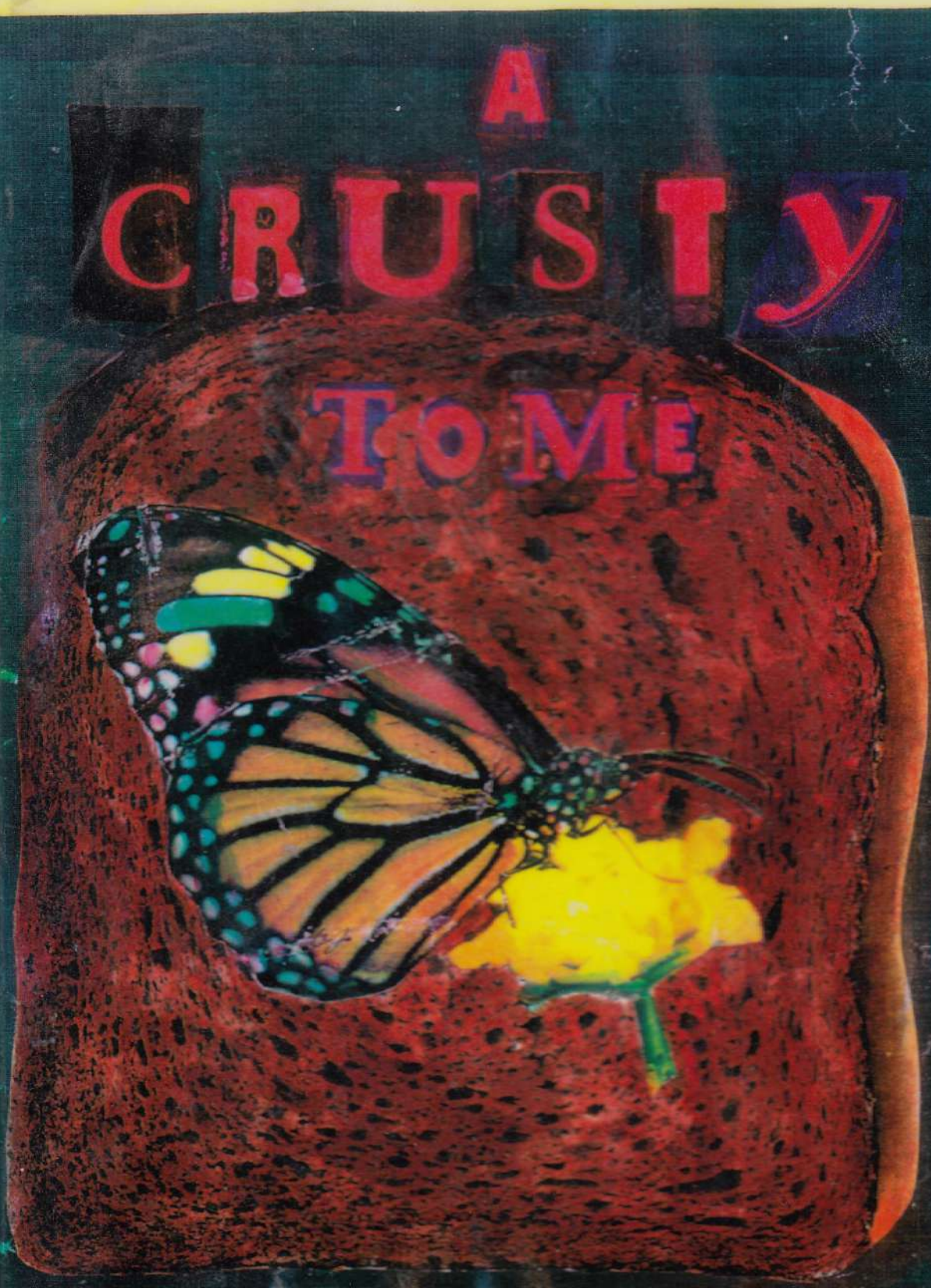
A CRUSTY TO ME



BARRY TAYLOR

CONTENTS

1 **A LEE FIRTH**
3 LIGHT YEARS;STUMPED;SMALL TOWN ATTITUDES
BEATING THE SYSTEM
4 NOW AND THEN
5 SOMEWHERE....ANYWHERE
6 PREDICAMENTS
7 HOME HELP US
8 COUNTDOWN
9 **ALEXANDER BARON**
11 PILGRIM
12 FOX - THE SECOND PHASE
14 RIPPLES
15 THE WORD
17 **BARRY TAYLOR**
18 THE DEAD MOSQUITO;AMERICAN FOOTBALLER
19 CENTRAL BLUES AND REDS
21 HIGHWAY ROBBERY
22 OCEAN BEAK
23 VERB AND EMOTION
24 HOLIDAY TRAIN
26 ST IVES
27 HOUSE AND LAWN OF POEM
28 THOU NICHTY FLEA;SMUGGLERS POEM
29 FAMILY FAVOURITES; GAME NIGHT
30 RYTHEM POEM
31 AUTUMN
32 BEAST HUNT;JINGLE
33 ROBERT GRAVES' "SLUT"
34 TIMES NOT CHANGE
35 HORSES NIGHTMARE - A DREAM OF 1993
36 RE LIFE
37 LEGION
38 ROMAN POEM;HOPS AND POPLARS
39 GREASE AND SWARFEGA;LONDON LIFE
40 SADNESS
41 MAYA

PILGRIM

The air on this December night is cold
And bites me to the bone as I depart,
But even Arctic winters couldn't hold
The bitter chill I feel inside my heart.

Trafalgar Square's alive,it's cheering crowd
Is merry with the voice of wine and song,
The melancholy traveller is cowed,
Dejectedly he joins the milling throng.

Strangers embrace as happiness abounds,
Contempt and loathing have no part to play,
Tonight it's all for real,good will resounds
Till midnight sweeps its scattered shards away.

And for the fifth year running I stand there:
The solitary stranger in the Square.

Ist January 1990

FOX - THE SECOND PHASE

Darkness falls early these November nights,
But as I close my gate I see him plain as day:
Just beyond my reach he pads softly in the road betwixt one forage and another,
Trotting across my line of sight like a stray dog,
Yet unmistakably not so.

Fox:

Here boy: tch, tch, tch, tch, tch.

He casts a suspicious glance my way,before turning about face
and making for my neighbour's front garden.

Here boy: tch, tch, tch, tch, tch.

No dice,he's having none of it,
But where twenty years ago he'd have run off like a wild one,
Tonight he merely keeps me at arms' length,
Like any wary lurcher.

Centuries of encroachment on,
and destruction of his natural habitat
have at last forced him to show himself,
But now it's done he doesn't give a damn,
Besides,there are spoils to be taken in the city.

It's probably him and not those confounded cats who keep ripping my rubbish bags to shreds,scattering paper,rotting fruit,and bits of meat
all over the front path.

He's in and out of the dustbin in a second,
Sensing at once:Nothing here for me,

Or is him a her?Now I see the animal so close up
it's smaller than I'd once imagined,

Fox:

Here boy: tch, tch, tch, tch, tch,

Pity he wouldn't respond to me though,
But one day in the not-too-distant-future
I'll call him and he'll come;
I'll throw him scraps from my table,
Stroke his fur like a dog,
Even teach him to retrieve a stick,
He's already lost his fear of humankind,
Now all he has to lose is his contempt,

RIPPLES

Ripples are born in an instant through an act of folly.
A stone, a splash,or a foolish fish thinking it can fly
Creates,incidentally,an ever-increasing rhythmic turbulence
On the surface of a static pond.
The shock waves reach out for infinity in all directions,
But they fall very short,and die
In either the genesis of a later generation,
Or in the apathy of lethargic waves:
They are here,and in a twinkling they are gone,
For such is the impermanence of things.

THE WORD

All comes from dust and all to dust returns,
As man from ape to fish,and fish from slime,
And while the Earth spins,while the sun still burns,
'Twixt womb and tomb we have but precious time.

We tread where better men have trod before,
And stand on giants' shoulders but we see
No further than the next great slump or war,
And turn our backs on truth and liberty.
Life is lost in the blinking of an eye,
And precious time like grains of sand slips by.

Forget the past,doomed ever to repeat
The errors and the follies of our kind,
Our passion runs high,as does our conceit,
To others' suff'ring we are deaf and blind.
Wounded,we strike our brothers in due course,
And for our sins show no trace of remorse.

We labour for the sake of making work,
Manipulated by the hidden hand,
Important tasks we should attend,we shirk,
And fail to see our shirking them was planned,
And as our masters pull our strings,we dance,
While trampling over others to advance.

We seek some higher purpose of our own,
Or of some God we know cannot exist,
Chase pie in sky into the great unknown,
And fashion shibboleths from morning mist,
Tread wearily!When castles in the air
Come crashing down,their ruin brings despair.

There is no higher purpose,any search
Is doomed to failure even 'fore it starts,
While prayers in temple,synagogue and church
Remain unanswered save to cheating hearts.
All is illusion,all is flawed perception,
Such are the vagaries of self-deception .

The only things of worth for any man
Are that he makes a good end of himself,
And that he helps design a better plan
For future generations free of pelf
And spiritual malaise;the only crime
Is that we squander all this precious time .